Schemes to assist tribals to lift water from rivers

1968. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) since the rivers in tribal areas originate from the hills and they have water throughout the year, whether his Ministry has any scheme to assist the tribals to lift this water to enable them to have second crops and meet the shortage of the grain in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Water Resources is implementing an "Accelerated Irrigaiton Benefits Programme" (AIBP) since 1999-2000 for motivating farmers for utilizing water resources through minor irrigation schemes including lift irrigaiton from river/nala for special category States of North-Eastern regions, other hilly States namely Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand and KBK districts of Orissa which are predominantly inhabited by tribals. This scheme was extended from December, 2005 to non-special category States to include Minor irrigaiton scheme which serve tribal and drought prone areas. This scheme helps to grow the second crops through creating irrigaiton facilities in these areas to enhance the production of different crops.

Surface minor irrigaiton (MI) schemes of States of North-East, Hilly States (Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttaranchal) and drought prone KBK districts of Orissa, which are approved by State Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)/State Planning Department, are eligible for assistance under the programme provided that (i) individual schemes are benefiting irrigation potential of at least 20 hectare and group of schemes (within a radius of 5 km) benefiting total ultimate irrigaiton potential of at least 50 hectare (ii) the Minor irrigation schemes have benefit-cost ratio of more than 1.0 and (iii) the development cost of these schemes per hectare is less than Rs. 1.00 lakh.

For Non-special category States, only those minor irrigation schemes with potential of more than 50 hectare, which serve tribal areas and drough prone areas, are to be included under AIBP.

Productivity and wages of agricultural labourer

1969. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the per worker productivity of agricultural labourer; and

(b) how does Government calculate per worker earnings in agriculture, when there is no fixed wage in different States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Collection, compilation and dissemination of statistical information on various aspects of labour is in the domain of Labour Bureau. Per worker productivity of agricultural labourer, as such, is not compiled and hence not available. Daily wage rates in respect of specified agricultural and non agricultural occupations from a fixed set of six hundred sample villages in twenty States are collected/compiled by National Sample Survey Organisation/Labour Bureau. The average wage rates at all-India level are derived by

dividing the sum-total of wages of all the 20 States by the number of quotations. The methodology and the wage rates are published in the Bureau's monthly publication 'Indian Labour Journal' and in its website: http://labourbureau.nic.in

Ex-gratia payment to kin of fishermen held captive in Pakistan

1970. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to grant an ex-gratia payment of Rs. 3 lakh to the next of kin of fishermen who have been held captive in Pakistan;

(b) if so, the total number of fishermen held captive in Pakistan;

(c) whether some fishermen are also being held captive in other countries; and

(d) if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are 312 Indian fishermen currently in Pakistan jails.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Extinction of local indigenous seeds

1971. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the local indigenous seeds grown in various areas are on the verge of extinction;

(b) the reasons for this calamity; and

(c) what measures are being planned to save the local indigenous seeds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The quality seed and planting materials of high yielding varieties/ hybrids of different crops constitute a key input for increasing their production and productivity. In order to ensure food and nutritional security it is essential that high yielding varieties are popularized for cultivation. The local indigenous crop varieties may be replaced by the adoption of high yielding varieties/hybids by the farmers to get higher yields and better returns. The natural calamities, human intervention for developmental activities including urbanizaiton and habitat destruction, disease/insect epidemics etc. are other causes of erosion of crop bio-diversity.

(c) The National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), New Delhi is collecting, conserving and documenting the germplasm of crop plants including seeds of local landraces/ farmer's varieties in National Genebank as also under the provisions of Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers' Rights Act (PPV & FR Act), 2001. The National Genebank presently holds more than 3.50 lakh accessions of over 1,200 crop/plant species.